

# Spectrum

## Family, friends honor fallen Soldier

Charmain Z. Brackett  
Correspondent

Sgt. Taurean Travanti Harris was the type of man who made a lasting first impression.

"I've rarely seen a Soldier who has had such a profound impact in such a short period of time," said Lt. Col. John Birdsong, commander of Task Force Lightning of the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade, as a wing of the brigade's motor pool was dedicated to Harris' memory on Jan. 25.

Harris was killed by an improvised explosive device on Aug. 2, 2007 in Afghanistan.

"I was personally amazed that so many people were affected by him," he said. "I was grateful to have known Taurean. We'll never forget him."

A native of Liberty, Miss., Harris joined the JROTC while in the ninth grade. By the time he was a high school senior, he was the battalion commander.

"He knew he wanted to be a Soldier," said Birdsong.

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**Lt. Col. John Birdsong  
Task Force Lightning Commander  
513th Military Intelligence Brigade**

He was trained as a heater and air-conditioner repairman, and he volunteered to be part of Task Force Lightning.

"He was such a good Soldier. He tried to fix everything in the FOB," said Sgt. Vladimir Ayala, Harris' team leader. "He fixed the air-conditioning in the FOB, the air-conditioning in every vehicle. I was proud to serve with Sgt. Harris."

And when it came to protecting the Soldiers who were part of the human military intelligence group, Harris was there to do his best once again.

On hand for the ceremony were several members of Har-

ris' Family including his mother, Yolanda Wagner.

"They asked me if my son had been properly honored," said Wagner, who recalled the day the schools let out in Mississippi for his funeral and the parade in his honor.

"He was honored and respected for who he was," she said.

It wasn't because he was black or white; he was honored because he was a Soldier.

"I know he was a good Soldier," she said.

In addition to naming the wing in his honor, a case has been placed inside the building



Photos by Marlene Thompson

**Fort Gordon service members, Family members and friends of Sgt. Taurean Harris salute the Soldier during a ceremony Jan. 25, dedicating a building wing in honor of Harris at the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade motor pool. Harris was killed in action Aug. 2, 2007 in Afghanistan.**



(Above) A member of the honor detail carries a plaque featuring memoirs of Sgt. Taurean Harris during a ceremony for the fallen Soldier Jan. 25 at Fort Gordon. (Below) Memorabilia of Harris' service are displayed in a permanent case in the building named in his honor.



(Above) Members of Sgt. Taurean Harris' Family somberly observe the plaque to be affixed to the building wing in honor of the fallen Soldier. (Below) Harris' mother wipes away tears as she is presented with a memorial to her son.



Photo by Charmain Z. Brackett

